

PATENT

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Cl
Sub D1

50. (Amended) An isolated and purified peptide having an amino acid sequence substantially homologous to an amino acid sequence of a domain of a pyrogenic exotoxin and derivatives of said peptide, which domain is not involved in binding of the exotoxin to T lymphocytes or MHC Class II molecules and forms a central turn in the exotoxin starting within β -strand 7 and connecting [it] the β -strand 7, via short β -strand 8, to α -helix 4, wherein said isolated peptide is capable of eliciting protective immunity against toxic shock induced by said pyrogenic exotoxin and/or capable of [antagnoizing] antagonizing toxin-mediated activation of T lymphocytes.

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action dated October 2, 2000. Claims 50-84 are pending.

THE INVENTION

Applicants have discovered that certain isolated peptides, derived from pyrogenic exotoxins that induce toxic shock, including, but not limited to Staphylococcus aureus exotoxin B (SEB) are capable of eliciting a protective immune response against toxic shock, as well as directly antagonize toxin-mediated lymphocyte activation. These peptides, which are not the intact toxin proteins, are substantially homologous to or similar in amino acid sequence to a domain of such exotoxins that is not involved in binding of the toxin to the T-cell receptor (TCR) or to MHC Class II molecules, but